**North Korea: a chronology of key events**

**Adapted from** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15278612)

**1945** - After World War II, Japanese occupation of Korea ends with Soviet troops occupying the north, and US troops the south.

**1946** - North Korea's Communist Party, called the Korean Workers' Party, inaugurated. Soviet-backed leadership installed, including Red Army-trained Kim Il-sung.

**1948** - Democratic People's Republic of Korea proclaimed, with Kim Il-sung installed as leader. Soviet troops withdraw.

**1950** - South declares independence, sparking North Korean invasion and the Korean War.

**1953** - Armistice ends Korean War.

**1960s** - Rapid industrial growth.

**1972**- North and South Korea issue joint statement on peaceful reunification.

**1985**- North Korea joins the international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, barring the country from producing nuclear weapons.

**1986**- Research nuclear reactor in Yongbyon becomes operational.

**1991**- North and South Korea join the United Nations.

**1993**- International Atomic Energy Agency accuses North Korea of violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and demands inspectors be given access to nuclear waste storage sites. North Korea threatens to quit Treaty.

**1993**- North Korea test-fires a medium-range Rodong ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan.

**1994**July - Death of Kim Il-sung. Kim Jong-il succeeds his father as leader.

**1994**October - North Korea and the US sign an Agreed Framework under which Pyongyang commits to freezing its nuclear programme in return for heavy fuel oil and two light-water nuclear reactors.

**1996** - Severe famine follows widespread floods; 3 million North Koreans reportedly die from starvation.

**1996** April - North Korea announces it will no longer abide by the armistice that ended the Korean War, and sends thousands of troops into the demilitarised zone.

**1998**August - North Korea fires a multistage long-range rocket which flies over Japan and lands in the Pacific Ocean, well beyond North Korea's known capability.

Historic handshake

**2000** June - Landmark inter-Korean summit takes place in Pyongyang between Kim Jong-il and South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, paving the way for the reopening of border liaison offices and family reunions. The South also grants amnesty to over 3,500 North Korean prisoners.

**2002** January - US President George W Bush labels North Korea, Iraq and Iran an "axis of evil" for continuing to build "weapons of mass destruction". Under Kim Jong-il, North Korea suffered a severe famine and became a nuclear-armed power

**2002** June - North and South Korean naval vessels wage a gun battle in the Yellow Sea. Some 30 North Korean and four South Korean sailors are killed.

**2002**September - Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi makes historic visit during which North Korea admits to having abducted 13 Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s and that at least four are still alive.

**2002**October - US and its key Asian allies Japan and South Korea halt oil shipments following North Korea's reported admission that it has secretly been developing a uranium-based nuclear programme.

**2002**December - North Korea announces it is reactivating nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and expels UN inspectors.

**2003**January - North Korea withdraws from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, marking the beginning of a series of six-party talks involving China, the Koreas, the US, Japan and Russia to try to resolve the nuclear issue.

**2003**May - North Korea withdraws from 1992 agreement with South Korea to keep the Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

**2003** October - Pyongyang declares it has completed the reprocessing of 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods. Experts say this would give the North enough weapons-grade plutonium to develop up to six nuclear bombs within months.

**2005** February - North Korea admits publicly for the first time that it has produced nuclear weapons for "self defence".

**2006** July - North Korea test fires seven missiles including a long-range Taepodong-2 missile, which crashes shortly after take-off despite it reportedly having the capability to hit the US.

**2006** October - North Korea conducts its first nuclear weapons test at an underground facility. The UN imposes economic and commercial sanctions on North Korea.

Pyongyang's missile launches have drawn international condemnation

**2007** July - North Korea shuts down it main Yongbyon reactor after receiving 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil as part of an aid package.

**2007** August - South Korea announces it will send nearly 50m US dollars in aid to the North after Pyongyang makes rare appeal for flood relief.

**2007** October - Second inter-Korean summit held in Pyongyang. President Roh Moo-hyun becomes the first South Korean leader to walk across the Demilitarized Zone separating North and South.

**2008** March - North-South relations deteriorate sharply after new South Korean President Lee Myung-bak promises to take a harder line on North Korea.

**2008** October - North agrees to provide full access to Yongbyon nuclear site after US removes it from terrorism blacklist.

**2009**January - North Korea says it is scrapping all military and political deals with the South, accusing it of "hostile intent".

**2009**April - North Korea launches a long-range rocket, carrying what it says is a communications satellite; its neighbours accuse it of testing long-range missile technology. Condemnation from the UN Security Council prompts North Korea to walk out of six-party talks and restart its nuclear facilities.

**2009**May - North Korea carries out its second underground nuclear test. UN Security Council condemns move in June.

**2009**November - North Korea's state-run news agency reports the reprocessing of 8,000 spent fuel rods is complete, garnering enough weapons-grade plutonium for one to two nuclear bombs.

**2010** March - North Korea sinks South Korean warship Cheonan near sea border.

The sinking of South Korea's Cheonan in 2010 ratcheted up tensions - already high - even further

**2010** November - North Korea reportedly shows an eminent visiting American nuclear scientist a new secretly-built facility for enriching uranium at its Yongbyon complex. The revelation sparks alarm and anger in US, South and Japan.

**2011** December - Death of Kim Jong-il. Kim Jong-un presides at funeral and takes over key posts by April.

**2012** April - Rocket launch - viewed internationally as a banned test of long-range Taepodong-2 missile technology - fails. North Korea says aim was to put a satellite into orbit to mark 100th birth anniversary of Kim Il-sung.

**2012** October - North Korea claims it has missiles than can hit the US mainland after South Korea and Washington announce a deal to extend the range of South Korea's ballistic missiles.

**2012** December - North Korea successfully launches a "rocket-mounted satellite" into orbit following a failed attempt in April.

**2013** February - UN approves fresh sanctions after North Korea stages its third nuclear test, said to be more powerful than the 2009 test.

**2013** April - North Korea says it will restart all facilities at its main Yongbyon nuclear complex and briefly withdraws its 53,000-strong workforce from the South-Korean-funded Kaesong joint industrial park stalling operations at 123 South Korean factories.

**2013** July - Panama impounds a North Korean ship carrying two MiG-21 jet fighters under bags of sugar. The UN later blacklists the ship's operator.

**2013** September - Sole ally China bans export to North Korea of items that could be used to make missiles or nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

**2014**March - North Korea test-fires two medium-range Rodong ballistic missiles for the first time since 2009, in violation of UN resolutions and just hours after the US, South Korea and Japan met in the Netherlands for talks.

**2015**September - North Korea confirms it has put its Yongbyon nuclear plant - mothballed in 2007 - back into operation.

**2015**December - US imposes new sanctions on North Korea over weapons proliferation, targeting the army's Strategic Rocket Force, banks and shipping companies.

**2016**November - UN Security Council further tightens sanctions by aiming to cut one of North Korea's main exports, coal, by 60 per cent.

**2017**January - Kim Jong-un says North Korea is in the final stages of developing long-range guided missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

**2017**February **-**Kim Jong-un's estranged half-brother Kim Jong-nam is killed by a highly toxic nerve agent in Malaysia, with investigators suspecting North Korean involvement.

**2017** July - Pyongyang test fires a long-range missile into the Sea of Japan, with some experts stating the missile could potentially reach Alaska.

**2017**August - Tension rises in war of words with US over North Korean threat to fire ballistic missiles near US Pacific territory of Guam.

**2018**January - First talks in two years between North and South Koreas begin thaw that leads to the North sending a team to the Winter Olympics in the South.

**2018**March - The United States and North Korea announce that their leaders plan to meet before June to discuss nuclear disarmament on the Korean peninsula.

**2018**April - Kim Jong-un becomes first North Korean leader to enter the South when he meets South Korean President Moon Jae-in for talks at the Panmunjom border crossing. They agree to end hostile actions and work towards reducing nuclear arms on the peninsula.